Consultation Paper
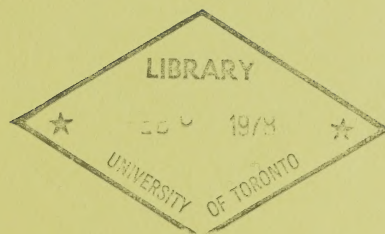# Local Children's Services
Committees:
Planning for the Future

Ⓣ Ontario

Ministry of
Community and
Social Services

Children's
Services
Division

For information regarding written submissions and inquiries, please turn to page 25 of the Consultation Paper.

January, 1978

Dear Friends,

The intention of this letter to you is to introduce a paper for consultation entitled "Local Children's Services Committees: Planning for the Future". For purposes of full and adequate discussion the paper itself is necessarily lengthy, but I personally wish to ensure that even a casual reader will not miss the highlights.

The paper intends to stimulate general discussion on the ways we help children with special needs and their families. We all know that real children often have changing and complex requirements for healthy development, but we have had a tendency to reduce complex human conditions to abstract categories. Thus we define such children variously as the "handicapped", "disturbed", "neglected" or "delinquent". You will note that each of these categories has tended to become associated with its own separate service system in spite of the reality that most children defy such easy classification. The consequence of this thinking has been a failure to appropriately serve children with multiple needs and a failure to plan adequately for a spectrum of service from prevention to intensive intervention.

To develop appropriate care and establish a full range of service, we must begin to think in terms of needs, both at an individual level and in aggregate for planning purposes. By beginning with needs, rather than with a small group of abstract categories, we are offered an opportunity to cut the Gordian knot of a system which, no matter how sophisticated, may continue to elude those who need help most. We must begin to think in terms of "what specific services or assistance does this child and family need for healthy growth?" rather than "what category does this child fit and therefore what agency or program should he or she be referred to?".

It is essential that we find better ways to allocate our scarce resources which means, in many cases, less expensive means of providing service. In order to meet the needs of children and their families, and yet keep costs under reasonable control, the provincial government has embarked on a

process of integration of services. I would like to emphasize the word "process" here, and make it clear that a period of time for development will be required to effect genuine integration at the provincial level. It will likewise require some time before full coordination of all services at the local level, under the authority of local government, is achieved. This will first require completion of a set of tasks — the identification of a universal spectrum of needs, types of services to meet these needs, an elaboration of standards and development of an adequate information system. All of this will lead to planned priorities for allocation of funds and resources. Also at this stage, the means of control over access to service will have to be developed. It is essential that the local children's committee supervise utilization and regulate the allocative aspect of assessment.

Provincial funding will flow to and be allocated by local government, which would thereby have, whatever the structure and composition of the committee, full authority, within the context of provincial responsibility for the delivery of appropriate levels of service and setting of standards. This goal cannot be easily or quickly achieved. In addition to the time required by the Children's Services Division to develop the necessary technology and organization, mutual understanding and trust must develop between and among local government, service deliverers and consumers, and working relationships must be established. The importance of this collaboration at the local level cannot be over–emphasized.

Accordingly we have decided to initiate two processes simultaneously. We have begun the task, in the provincial government, of putting our own house in order. We will, in the months ahead, develop proposals for service and program priorities, legislation, standards and information services, and will proceed to implementation of full integration of services. This will prepare for the time when responsibility will be assumed by local government. However, before that time, it is essential that we begin to develop local children's services committees which can take on these new responsibilities. Because we are in largely unknown territory, only a few such committees will be established at the outset, permitting selection of favourable circumstances, variation in location and model, and close scrutiny at each stage of development. Experience from this effort will give us directions for the future.

Each committee selected for implementation in 1978 will develop through predetermined stages, evolving gradually toward full authority over local children's services. A minimum beginning function would involve a carrying out, with provincial government assistance, of an examination of the local community's strengths, weaknesses and resources for meeting the special needs of children. It is likely that the committee would also begin coordinating and in some cases funding services for the hard–to–serve child. This would provide additional assistance for the

child, but would also assist the committee in developing a knowledge of children's needs and services in a more direct way.

The next stage would involve increasing preoccupation with the system, encouraging coordination, developing local priorities within provincial guidelines and standards, advising the Children's Services Division regarding program budgeting within its boundaries and preparing for full acquisition of responsibility. The final phase could only be reached when both provincial and local development were sufficiently advanced permitting effective control over the system, particularly at such key points as access to residential care, and when provincial–municipal funding arrangements were established. This would involve formal transfer of delivery responsibility to the committee and funding to local government. Through each of the stages the committee would acquire increased competence and legitimacy in the eyes of the public, and become clearly identified as the responsible body for children's services. The provincial government cannot fully hand over responsibility to a body or committee which is not itself accountable ultimately to the people.

In addition to this paper's general purpose in stimulating discussion, it is our hope that it will also serve as a guide for those wishing to submit proposals for children's services committees. It develops the provincial government's requirements for such proposals and outlines established policy for children's services. For added clarity and emphasis I will summarize these here as follows:

1. Simplicity of structure: A children's services committee structure should be understandable to the public at large and should minimize bureaucratic build–up. Excessive spending on administration must be avoided.

2. Participation: Heretofore services have developed with the support and guidance of community and professional groups as well as government. A committee structure should ensure adequate participation of consumers, deliverers and elected officials.

3. Areas: Boundaries of authority of a committee must coincide with relevant local political jurisdiction (regional government, county, municipality, or district).

4. Flexibility: Institutions tend to become rigid and self serving over time. The committee structure and function should attempt to take this into account by protecting capacity for change.

5. Membership: Proposals for children's services committees must deal with terms of office and means of selection of members.
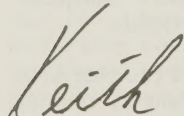
6. Accountability: Proposals must describe clear lines of accountability to local government, as well as responsibility to the provincial government.

7. Process: Proposals must take the requirements of consumers, service deliverers and local government into account and ideally should be the product of collaboration of these constituencies.

8. Provincial Policy: Proposals should take into account principles of service as articulated from time to time by the Children's Services Division, as well as provincial intentions to control general distribution of services through specific funding arrangements.

Within the context of these guidelines (more fully developed in the paper) local communities can design services reflecting local conditions found in their respective areas.

We will respond to proposals, in some cases by suggesting closer attention to one or another requirement which seems treated insufficiently, and in other cases   by raising further questions. Ultimately the decision for selection will be made by applying various criteria such as the desirability of geographical, political and model variation among the committees first established, the likelihood of success, given local history and attitudes, and of course the intrinsic merits of the proposal as finally shaped through dialogue between those involved locally and the provincial government.

I encourage all those concerned with improving the care of children with special needs and their families in this province, to carefully read this paper, reflect upon the issues, and participate fully in the consultation process now beginning.

Yours sincerely,

Keith C. Norton
Minister

Contents

In recent years, a certain dissatisfaction has developed with the uncoordinated and unsystematized network of government and non–government agencies serving children with special needs and their families. Special needs of children are defined in The Child Welfare Act as those "needs related to or created by physical, mental, emotional, behavioural or other handicaps of children". These needs have been met only partially in the minds of most observers. For this reason, the Government of Ontario has created a new Children's Services Division within the Ministry of Community and Social Services with a mandate to improve, in comprehensive and cost–effective fashion, the delivery of services to meet those needs.

Taking into account the experiences of other provinces and other countries, the Ministry is now inviting local communities to assist in determining how to make present services and new programs most effective.

There are several aspects to the task facing the new Division. We must first identify those members of our communities for whom the system of services is intended. We need a clear understanding of what constitutes their special needs. This means that we must analyze carefully the needs as they are expressed by troubled children and their families, and must attempt to examine the social trends which will affect the lives of these children in the years to come. We must identify also the services already available within our communities.

From such analysis and examination, we may come to an agreement concerning the setting of objectives and establishment of priorities, as well as an indication of how we intend to develop the necessary services.

A wide variety of people are involved with and affected by the system of children's services in this province. Policy–makers, program managers, front line workers and consumers of services all have knowledge to be used and points of view to be considered. If the system of services for children is to be well organized to meet needs which we recognize, we must ensure that all of those who have a stake in the services also have the opportunity to participate in their development.

Once we have identified carefully the special needs requiring services, we may obtain a clearer idea of how to use the wide variety of resources available from service agencies, community organizations, local governments and the provincial government. We can then begin to provide service in a tailored and individualized way to children, rather

than pouring our finances into pre—packaged programs which may or may not be suitable for the troubled child.

It is apparent that each part of the children's services system (programs, money, consumers, information and other) must be organized to ensure that the end result is efficient and effective service. Clear lines of communication among consumers, workers, managers and decision—makers will support the organization of the system, and ensure that each remains an active participant in providing effective service for children with special needs.

Organizing a full range of services, however, is only part of our task. We must also ensure that services and resources are accessible to those people who need them. Even the best services can be, in fact, useless to people who are prevented from using them for such reasons as linguistic and cultural difficulties, great distances to travel, lack of information and the stigmatizing effect of asking for help. Ways must be found to display, present and deliver children's services which remove such obstacles.

No matter how the services are organized, we cannot know if they are effective unless we find ways to monitor their impact on the consumers. We must devise methods to receive feedback from those using the services, in order to determine the degree to which their needs have been met by the services we are providing. Such information will help us make the adjustments necessary to improve the quality of those services.

All services and activities, of course, will require money to finance their development. Most of the money will be provided by the provincial government, with smaller contributions coming from local government, and other agencies and community organizations. If we know clearly what services we are intending to provide and for whom, we will be able to determine the cost of those services in our communities. At the same time, recognizing the scarcity of financial resources, we will be able to ensure that the limited money available is spent on services for those most in need.

Since the greatest proportion of funds for children's services comes from the public treasury through the provincial or local governments, we must clearly be accountable to the public at large for how we spend these public funds. Specific reporting procedures will have to ensure accountability for the monies spent within communities. Ultimately, the children's services committee, which is to be established at the local level according to announced provincial policy, will be accountable not

only for how it spends its money, but also for the overall effect these expenditures have on children and their families with special needs within the community.

Finally, we will have to develop structures which ensure that the job gets done. The structure of a local children's services committee, along with its composition and modes of accountability, must establish a framework within which we can perform a variety of functions, offer a full spectrum of services and ensure that these activities are meeting the identified needs of children in our communities.

Having begun to reorganize children's services by consolidating programs within the provincial government, the Children's Services Division now seeks to plan decentralization through public discussion. This paper will summarize the reasons for the decision to reorganize children's services at the provincial and local levels and develop the context within which consultation and implementation will occur.

Part One
Established Policy

Once the decision was taken to establish local children's services committees, there were two broad implementation options. On the one hand, the provincial government could develop a specific model, describing functions, structure and relationship to local government and then proceed to establish such bodies throughout the province. On the other hand, a more open ended, evolutionary process, involving consultation and phased development could be considered. After reviewing the experience of other jurisdictions that have attempted reorganization in this field, it was concluded that no single valid blueprint was available and the latter course seemed wiser. Following from this view, the idea of establishing a few embryonic committees at a very early date emerged. Rather than await the development of a detailed and final description of local delivery before beginning, it was felt that by setting up several committees early on, a variety of experiences could be examined. Ultimately, after proceeding through preliminary stages of responsibility, committees will be assuming a full range of responsibilities for children's services under the auspices of local government.

In submitting this paper for public discussion and response, the Division is formally opening a consultation process which will lead to the establishment of a network of local children's services committees right across the province.

The paper will assist agencies, groups, municipalities and individuals concerned with children's services in addressing the issues of coordination and improvement within the system.

We invite all such groups to offer general reactions to the ideas presented in the paper and to comment on how those ideas relate to circumstances found within their particular local communities. These reactions and comments will become part of the overall consultation process and can be forwarded to the Children's Services Division of the Ministry of Community and Social Services to facilitate that process.

In addition, some groups will wish to forward to the Ministry specific proposals for the establishment of children's services committees within their local areas. We ask that any such proposals be submitted by April 1, 1978 (although overall consultation will continue after that date). Until that date senior officials from the Children's Services Division will be discussing proposals with the local groups and will be developing criteria leading to the selection of a few developmental models to be established as local children's services committees to commence operation in 1978.

Community Liaison Groups, which have been established throughout the province, will assist in all aspects of the consultation process and will

facilitate the forwarding of reactions, comments and proposals to the Ministry. A newsletter from the Children's Services Division will be keeping people informed of issues raised as well as progress achieved.

A.   Provincial Integration

Established in order to consolidate provincial government services to families and children with special needs, the Children's Services Division is a somewhat unique government agency. Provincial government responsibilities were previously assigned to a number of ministries, each with a specific clientele and a specific mode of service delivery. It is implicit that the Division will not associate itself with any particular sphere of service or professional group or tradition of care, but will seek to influence and coordinate any and all modes of care, support and treatment required by children with special needs. In this way, the Division hopes to transcend more traditional categories since the same children are variously, and often in combination, the neglected, the delinquent, the disturbed and the handicapped. The Division has a mandate to look after all the special needs of children, and to see that a full, integrated spectrum of services is available.

Indicative of the size of the responsibilities involved is the estimated provincial expenditure for the programs being transferred from the Ministry of Correctional Services ($35.0 million), the Ministry of Health ($61.0 million), the Ministry of the Attorney General ($2.7 million), and within the Ministry of Community and Social Services funds for child welfare ($82.7 million), for Day Nurseries ($40.0 million) and for Children's and Youth's Institutions ($7.0 million). Depending upon the particular program area, additional funds may be contributed by other bodies including the federal government (direct cost sharing or family allowances), municipalities (cost sharing), and charities and individuals (direct financial support or volunteer aid). Other programs currently being reviewed for transfer are those for the retarded, and child and adolescent units which are part of larger hospitals. Contractual relationships are currently being explored to permit the Children's Services Division to fund some programs without taking over operating responsibilities. Because of the possible interruption of program continuity, another group of services must be given further careful consideration: crippled children's centres and programs, some children's psychiatric units in general and special hospitals, and homes for special care. As noted earlier, integration allows for a more rationally developed service system; but the province recognizes that the mere transfer of programs under one authority does not automatically bring about effective integration.

Following the transfer of programs from the Ministries of Correctional Services, Health, the Attorney General and Community and Social Services, the Children's Services Division will exercise a number of major responsibilities. Through standards and guidelines it will ensure that there exists, across the province, equality of access to a basic range of services to be provided by both the provincial government and local communities. Overall policy development and planning will be related to the establishment of priorities, which will be refined through periodic publication and discussion over the next two years. This process will attempt to reach consensus with respect to broad priorization of needs at provincial and local levels.

It is not the intention of the Division to maintain responsibility for the actual delivery of programs once overall integration has been achieved. That responsibility will be decentralized, allowing the central office of the Division to be a relatively small operation , concerned with broad policy issues, developing standards of service, monitoring performance, funding, consultation, research and training.

B.   Local Coordination and Phased Decentralization

As described above, the effect of the establishment of the Children's Services Division is to consolidate, in one organizational unit, all the Ontario Government's responsibilities for services to children with special needs.

The second major aspect of reorganization will be the gradual but deliberate decentralization to the local level of the responsibility for coordinated delivery of these services, under the authority of local government. The literature on reorganization of human services, as well as the experience of other jurisdictions consulted, suggests that effective results require prior mobilization of local support for coordination efforts. Other prerequisites for assumption of local delivery responsibility include development of adequately uniform and explicit standards of service with associated information systems, redress of regional service and funding allocation inequities, and revision of legislation. The latter has been published, while the others are being developed as the subjects of future consultation papers.

This paper brings forward a series of questions related to the establishment of local committees within the context of established policies. It is intended that these questions will elicit general response and reactions, and will assist in preparing formal proposals for the establishment of local

children's services committees. Some of the questions raised are:

1.   What functions should be performed at the local level?

2.   Are the same functions to be performed by all local committees?

3.   How will these functions change over time?

4.   What is the provincial role in ensuring performance of these functions?

5.   What structure would best enable a local committee to perform its functions?

6.   Who will be members of the local committees?

7.   How can an appropriate balance of membership be assured?

8.   How can accountability to local government best be assured?

9.   Through what mechanisms will such accountability be achieved?

For these and a number of other specific questions raised in the paper, there are potentially a variety of answers. Models will be developed from among the proposals submitted for implementation in 1978, but these models may differ quite significantly in terms of functions, structure, composition and accountability. Ultimately, there will be a basic consistency in the committees established across the province. It is expected that at least one model will be put in place in Northern Ontario. Other models might be established in a regional municipality area, and in a rural or county area. Population sizes will differ but a minimal size for benefits and cost will be worked out between the province and the local bodies selected.

The accountability of local committees to local government is an essential feature of any approach taken, and there will be continuing responsibility to the province for the delivery of appropriate levels of service. The local committees will pass through a number of stages toward full accountability:

Stage 1

       information gathering and the performance of a general advisory role with responsibility for attending to the care of particularly hard to place and serve children.

Stage 2

>performance of planning duties for the area based on information gathered; as experience is developed and capacities and competencies increased, responsibility for budget review and priority setting.

Stage 3

>responsibility for ensuring that a full range of required services is available, although the committee will not necessarily be involved in the direct delivery of services; and responsibility for allocation of funds.

For communities with some history of successful joint planning and coordination, and with the willingness of all parties concerned to move forward quickly toward fuller coordination, a model might be proposed which would actually begin at a more advanced stage. For communities with a population scattered widely over great geographical distances, and containing many small towns, villages, municipalities, unorganized territories or native populations, the proposed model may require a different interpretation of local government accountability. For communities encompassed by a regional government, a suitable model might assume a larger number of functions with some responsibilities being delegated to area municipalities contained within it. This might take the form of a number of local committees working together, or might, at a preliminary stage, involve a single area municipality.

Because the combined integration, coordination and decentralization efforts will be moving forward simultaneously, each stage of implementation requires careful examination and evaluation. There must be adequate time and resources devoted to ensuring that government and community leaders, program managers, service providers, consumers and the general public all come to an understanding of the process and their respective roles and responsibilities within it. New administrative structures and support processes will be required and must be tested to ensure their adequacy and appropriateness to the tasks of the local committees. New resources, both financial and technical, must be made available to aid in overall evaluation, but bureaucracies must not be allowed to develop needlessly. Local committees must remain flexible and responsive in order to adjust quickly to perceived failures. Finally, recognition will have to be given to the fact that the children's services system in Ontario is among the largest and most complex in North

America. Because its component parts have developed separately over the years, integration and coordination will require major changes in practices, philosophy and even language on the part of all concerned.

Part Two
Room for Choice

Given this description of the established policy regarding children's services, it becomes clear that a variety of possibilities exist with regard to functions, structure, composition and accountability of local committees. The province does not intend to present a finished blueprint with all the details and nuances set out. Nor does it intend to bring forward a "hidden agenda" at some future point. Progress may seem slow to some, given the situation now existing with regard to some troubled children. It may appear to others that the pace is far too rapid, considering the complexity of the problems. It can only be stated, at this point, that the pace of implementation will be moderate with visible milestones, and that room for choice in the implementation of policies exists with each step taken.

A. General Concerns

The province has stated clearly the stance it has taken with regard to integration and coordination and has manifested its total commitment to consultation prior to and continuing after the first experimental efforts with local committees. The Associate Deputy Minister and other senior officials of the Division have held meetings throughout the province thereby beginning the dialogue required for the reorganization process.

Among the questions most frequently raised in these local meetings, the following are of special importance:

1.   Will new structures and bureaucracies complicate service delivery and increase overall costs?

2.   Will new cost sharing arrangements lessen total services available?

3.   What costs, if any, are to be thrown back upon the municipal tax base?

4.   Is local government in Ontario adequately prepared to deal with the issue of children's services?

5.   Will extended discussion delay immediate solutions to pressing problems?

6.   Will financing be available for needed preventive services and programs oriented toward strengthening the family unit?

7.   Will service providers, professionals and volunteers be put at a disadvantage as a result of local government control?

8.   Will local committees gradually become "special purpose bodies" to the detriment of effective local government planning?

9.   Will professionals in the fields of medicine and education be integrated into the new system?

10. What role will the Children's Services Division play in directing or advising local committees?

These questions and others may be based on experiences that have occurred in the past in this and other jurisdictions. Regardless of their origin, they are quite genuine concerns, and must be addressed over time by all parties working together in trust and cooperation.

B. Growing Consensus

In addition to these and other concerns brought forward to date during the consultation process, there appears to be a gradually developing consensus in a number of areas.

1.   Local conditions vary greatly and no single approach is necessarily right for all.   The opportunity to use past and present experiences with local cooperation within one's own area as the basis for model building is important. It enables a local community to suggest how the relevant actors might participate in the system in a way that best suits the needs of that locale. This permits a clear establishment of relevant priorities at the local level and assists in avoiding needless creation of bureaucracy and replacement or duplication of present professional and administrative competencies.   A comprehensive spectrum of services becomes possible ranging from those which emphasize supportive and supplementary (non–institutional) care to those providing substitutional (institutional) care.

2.   Some type of authoritative coordination at the local level is essential to enable individual service providers, agencies, groups or others to transcend special interests for the sake of the child in trouble. With particular emphasis on the need for coordinated intake, assessment, placement, tracking, monitoring and evaluation procedures, a local body may move firmly toward improved delivery of services to children. At the same time, it is recognized that presently there exist limited financial resources for effective programming and planning, and that any central mechanism established at the local level must not develop at the expense of needed services.   To permit

effective local coordination, legislation which enables us to reconcile present inconsistencies regarding funding and service delivery responsibilities should not be delayed needlessly. Similarly, comprehensive standards and information systems should be developed as soon as possible.

3.   The "phased decentralization" and developmental approach appear to be appropriate. While the stated policy requires accountability to local government, it is incumbent on local communities themselves to define clearly this accountability in terms related to the needs of children and the responsibilities taken on by the local committee. Further, it must be recognized that any local committee will have to construct mechanisms which relate to areas outside the specific jurisdiction of the Children's Services Division (for example school boards, district health units, recreation departments and other). Such mechanisms are essential for any coherent policy-making and planning. Without them, many of the inconsistencies of the present situation will persist.

Other aspects of a general consensus will evolve as partners in the children's services system work jointly toward defining clearer goals and more specific objectives, strategies and techniques.

C.   Choice of Functions

As noted above, various local communities will be selecting models to reflect their local situations. Communities with a history of successful joint planning and coordination, communities with scattered populations and vast geographical distances, and communities under regional forms of government may each be expected to determine a different series of functions to be performed by the local committee. These functions will partially determine the structure and composition of each committee.

Some functions may be performed directly by the committee, some delegated to other bodies, and some ensured through purchase of service arrangements. Whatever the arrangement, the local committee will be responsible. The needs of families and children in trouble will determine the type of service provided, replacing a system where funding determined the type of treatment prescribed. Excessive numbers of assessments and referrals, and undue movement from one service to another should be minimized and placement functions monitored. Emphasis should be placed on provision of services to the child and his or her family within the home, and plans formulated for establishing support and supplementary care in preference to substitutional care wherever possible. Where residential care is necessary, it should be provided within the community. It may be necessary to identify funding to be allocated for hard to place children.

In early stages of development there will probably be only minimal change in the functions of existing local agencies, but in later stages there may occur substantial modifications. This will depend upon the changing needs and priorities identified, and decisions concerning the most effective ways of providing service.

The careful use of limited resources under the control of the local committee will assist in bringing about a rationalized system of children's services more directly accountable to those who are using the services: the citizens of the Province of Ontario. Such accountability exercised through local government will grow through subsequent stages as functions are exercised more comprehensively.

More specifically, a local children's committee within this context may gradually assume the following functions:

1.   Identifying Service Needs

Within the area of its jurisdiction, a committee may identify the special needs of children and their families by examining the records and reports of service providers, contacting front line workers and consumers, cooperating with municipal officials and staff personnel, and establishing exchange with local planning and research organizations. It may make use of the information system presently being developed by the province, and secure technical assistance and advice in developing its own capabilities.

2.   Identifying Service Gaps

With the cooperation of all agencies involved in the delivery of children's services in the area, the committee will identify and analyze existing services. Where such services fail to meet the perceived needs of children, or where underutilization, duplication or overutilization of services and facilities occur, preliminary adjustment plans can be devised. Again with the help of the province—wide information system and through information exchange with other jurisdictions, the committee will become aware of all available services and be in a position to recommend elimination of non—required programs or the creation of new ones.

3.   Planning and Program Development

When the committee takes responsibility for developing a comprehensive plan for children's services in the area, the need for a careful needs assessment and thorough resource inventory is evident. Decisions must be made regarding how broad such planning may be in scope and intent. Projections of social trends within the community will be required including housing, employment, population growth and economic development. Local planning should be done by persons not involved in the daily responsibilities

of service delivery operations, but who remain in constant touch with service providers, consumers and citizens. Mechanisms must be established to allow input to the planning process from all concerned parties. Individual agencies may retain their own planning functions, but the committee may review and give approval to such activities within the context of priorities identified by the committee.

The Children's Services Division will retain major responsibility in the area of planning and statistical development. Within existing resources it will assist local committees by furnishing information to help deal with such problems as:

a.   a multiplicity of entrance points to the system with no control over access;

b.   a multiplicity of funding patterns causing confusion and pre—determining types of treatment;

c.   analyzing the cost—benefit of services to which funds are allocated.

The Division will develop an improved information system, and in cooperation with communities will bring consistent and meaningful responses to a series of questions that arise:

a.   What is the number of potential users not presently in the system?

b.   What is the total number of children in the system?

c.   What is the number of referrals from one service to another?

d.   What are the reasons for such referrals?

e.   What type of treatment is required, when and for whom?

f.   What is the total dollar cost for all services within one year?

This overall planning and statistical development must be done by the province within existing resources.. A mutual obligation between the province and the local communities to plan cooperatively will ensure effectiveness.

In some areas, especially in Northern Ontario, the need for immediate development of new programs may be greater than the requirement for long—range planning. Resources must be organized around particular tasks to meet specific needs. Emphasis on the long—range planning component of the system may legitimately give way to a higher priority for a period of time. However, if coordination of all services is to occur, the planning

function remains essential and must become a major feature over time.

4.   Giving Assistance to Hard to Place and Serve Children

No matter how carefully organized the system, certain children will remain particularly difficult to serve.   For example,   a number of physically handicapped   children require services for additional emotional and psychological conditions which require treatment from a number of diverse sources.

Multiple–problem children do not always find treatment easily and may slip tragically through or past the system. Some may be both blind and retarded; others may be victims of cerebral palsy with added emotional disturbances. Others still may have combinations of disease and handicaps which make normal treatment inadequate.

Children such as these require specialized treatment on a medium or long–term basis.   The children's services committee may take on direct responsibilities for the child who cannot be helped by the ordinary available means. Through special funding arrangements, it can assist in developing an individualized, tailored response, often through contracting for the necessary service or facilitating the establishment of new programs.   The committee may contact neighboring communities to acquire services, keeping the child as close to the home community as possible. Care must also be taken that the child's reintegration into the home community be accomplished successfully.

5.   Ensuring Accessibility of Service

Distribution of services within regions must be equitable.   Financial difficulties faced by families of children in need often prevent their taking advantage of some community services or force them to choose less adequate treatment. Other services may be at too great a distance, and linguistic and cultural problems may further obstruct service delivery. An agency may be unaware of another agency's eligibility criteria and overlook viable alternative treatment. Reasons such as confidentiality may prevent information on a child from being passed along to a source which might serve his or her needs. The multiple–problem child in particular confronts these obstacles, but all troubled children meet them to a certain degree. The committee's role in this regard will require special competence and knowledge regarding questions of funding eligibility. Uniformity of services in every location is not a pre–requisite for comprehensive coordination and equitable distribution. Pathways must be found which bring special services to children, or failing that bring the child to the special services. Here again, a province–wide information system will assist.

6.   Ensuring Adequacy of Assessment, Referral, Placement and Tracking

The local committee will assume responsibility for ensuring adequate assessment, referral, placement and tracking without necessarily becoming directly involved in all aspects of the transaction. These four interrelated functions describe the process of an individual negotiating for a service to meet a felt need.

A local committee, in ensuring the adequacy of assessment procedures and subsequent placement of a child, needs to have at its disposal means whereby inappropriate placements will be prevented and difficult placements expedited. The system must provide the committee with information, as well as mechanisms to review, monitor and adjust assessment and placement decisions for the benefit of the child in trouble.

The assessment and referral functions would still be carried out primarily by those providing services, with the committee having resources available to assist them in procuring a special service not readily available in the community. Because the committee generally will not be directly involved in providing the service, its main functions would be to "track" the child through the services, monitor the outcome of the service, and periodically review the collective results of service in order to make improvements in the system. The province has a commitment to develop information systems that permit the "tracking" of the child by the committee.

7.   Monitoring and Evaluating Service Provided

Connected with its responsibility for ensuring adequate delivery of services for children, the committee must be able to determine whether certain activities are being properly performed. The province will assist local committees in evaluating the quality of care through development of standards. It will also assist in enabling the committees to monitor the delivery process with technical and managerial advice, and will help, over the long term, in developing capacities to monitor the outcome of services. A consultation paper on information systems will be made available to discuss many of these issues.

8.   Establishing Priorities

The establishment of priorities within the children's services system is required at both the provincial and local levels. In the developmental strategy adopted by the province to bring about integration, coordination and decentralization of responsibilities to the local level, priority-setting is a very difficult task because of multiple uncertainties. Fiscal constraints have been imposed in a time of great economic stress. The provincial government intends to balance its overall budget within a few years. There are unanswered questions concerning the new federal Social Services Act. Implications of the proposed Young Offenders Act are not yet clear. And finally, although general provincial goals and objectives for the Children's Services Division have been stated, specific priorities have not yet been assigned to the various areas. These priorities will be made clearer in the months ahead. In anticipation of clarification of these questions, the committee must review all of its needs and all of its existing services with great care and diligence. It is expected that such careful

review will allow for rational priority–setting to take place at an early stage. With competencies developed, the priority–setting function over time may become broader in scope and more firmly based with all relevant data in hand.

9.   Reviewing Budget and Financial Auditing

Administrative and management tools are available for performing tasks of budgetary review and financial audit. Whether these tasks are to be assumed directly by the local committee or developed by professional staff with the assistance of local government financial officers or others from service agencies, the committee will be responsible for assuring that proper budgets and financial reports are available. These documents must not only present traditional item–by–item expenditures and overall program costs, but also should contain information on program cost effectiveness. The purchase of service arrangements developed by the committee through contract agreements will form part of the basis for financial accountability. The province will assist local committees by establishing a system of funding which identifies units of service related to types and levels of care. Discrete units of service being delivered across a variety of programs will be identified and costed.

10.   Allocating Funds

Future funding relationships of the provincial government, municipal governments, local children's services committees and service delivery agencies must be determined. Revised arrangements are essential to make the overall delivery system more responsive to the needs of children in the province and to provide a method for developing alternative services in the communities. Problems have occurred because of funding anomolies related to such legislation as The Child Welfare Act, The Training Schools Act, The Children''s Institutions Act, The Children's Mental Health Centres Act, and The Day Nurseries Act.

It is not yet certain what will result from the federal government's proposal under the new Social Services Act for funding services ranging from crisis intervention to counselling to family support. Some additional services may be added for cost sharing under the new Young Offenders legislation.

There exists, in Ontario, a wide ranging delivery system funded to a great extent by the provincial government, although in part dependent upon agencies not under provincial control. Components of this system include programs within provincial ministries, service agencies, private charitable institutions, private profit–making institutions and municipal departments. It is the intent of the government to preserve this mix of elements within the system, although not necessarily in the same proportions as traditionally experienced.

Quality of care will be ensured through province—wide standards, and provincial funding and guidelines will ensure that a full spectrum of care becomes available. The province will continue to provide services which cannot be funded locally, or which meet needs which are not exclusively local. Examples of these services would include the provision of provincial institutes, research programs, and staff training activities.

Administrative tasks taken on by the local committee are considerable and may be assisted in a number of ways: through clear definition of the task and careful economizing; through provincial help in establishing an information system and planning which is coordinated with municipal government planning; and reallocation of administrative and planning resources from existing agencies and structures.

New funding arrangements for children's services must be negotiated by the Ministry and the municipalities. The exact formula will be largely affected by two factors:

1. The rationalization of funding structures for both residential and non—residential programs as they are integrated within the Children's Services Division and given a new legislative mandate;

2. The new federal proposal for funding of social services under the Social Services Act.

Several principles will guide negotiations for provincial/municipal cost sharing arrangements aimed at the development of children's services:

First:

The Division will provide assistance to the municipalities to ensure the careful control of costs and the maintenance of standards of service developed by the Division.

Second:

There must be a mechanism to provide financial stability to agencies to promote both continuity of service and long-range planning.

Third:

There must be financial incentives to develop high priority programs.

It will take time to work through these issues and to arrive at a new, comprehensive funding formula. In the short run, however, the Division is committed to fund the development of several children's services committees as developmental projects.

The detailed arrangements for funding of these projects will take the form of temporary agreements negotiated with the local governments in the areas selected.

It remains clear however , that full delegation of authority to a local children's committee cannot occur until provincial/municipal cost sharing agreements have been negotiated.

D.   Choice of Structure, Composition and Accountability

If the needs of troubled children and their families are to remain the most important factor in developing local service patterns, the structure and composition of the children's services committee (CSC) must allow it to respond to those needs in accountable, consistent and yet creative fashion. The developmental approach outlined above, combined with phased decentralization of responsibilities from the provincial level, require that the model chosen allow for the assumption of added functions over time. In the early stages of growth, the committee becomes thoroughly acquainted with local needs and resources and may assume responsibility for particularly hard to place and serve children. With improved competencies and heightened credibility within the community, the committee acquires fuller authority in ensuring that a complete range of required services is available and accessible to all in need. Within the context of provincial legislation, standards and guidelines, it establishes local priorities giving preference to family support services and supplementaty care over institutional or residential services where possible. It suggests new programs, reviews budgets and becomes the body responsible for the allocation of funds.

In attempting to respond to the challenge of comprehensive coordination of the children's services delivery system, local communities must carefully examine not only available resources and identified needs but also their past history of collective commitment to working together. By means of such examination, responses to the present discussion paper will lead to growth in understanding of overall community concerns. It will lead to realistic proposals for the establishment of local committees, as well as encourage continued coordination activities in all communities.

1.   Basic Guidelines for Choice

From an analysis of existing problems in children's services and established policy, certain guidelines emerge. These guidelines create a framework for discussion, and indicate what is required in proposals forwarded to the province as requests for the establishment of a local committee.

Guidelines on Structure

a. Clarity of design allowing for administrative simplicity and minimum bureaucratic growth.

b. Definite focus of responsibility, understandable to the public and perceived as legitimate.

c. Flexibility in responding to changing needs of troubled children and their families.

d. Maximum participation of concerned interests including government, service providers, community organizations and consumers.

e. Evidence of commitment on the part of all concerned interests to the coordination effort proposed.

f. Defined mechanisms for resolving disputes regarding service delivery.

g. Area of jurisdiction related to political jurisdictions: regional municipalities, counties, municipalities or districts.

h. Specified involvement of any sub-committees, advisory committees, task forces or other subsidiary groups.

i. Specified ultimate areas of expenditure including staff, programs, any necessary stipend for committee members and overall coordination activities (costs not to exceed a small percentage of total children's services cost within the jurisdiction).

Guidelines on Composition

a. Representation of concerned constituencies within the structure, whether at committee, sub-committee or advisory level (municipal elected officials, consumers, service providers and public).

b. Representation within the structure allowing reasonable balance of interests at committee, sub-committee, and advisory levels.

c.   Specified manner of selection of members and chairmen of committee, sub-committees and advisory groups as well as terms of office and areas of responsibilities.

d.   Flexibility of composition allowing for continuity and rotation of members.

Guidelines on Accountability

a.   Clear lines of accountability to local government.

b.   Specified reporting relationships and areas of responsibility among the committee, service agencies, consumers and community organizations.

c.   Liaison procedures relating to services not under the authority of local committee (eg. health, education).

d.   Reporting relationships and accountability for committee staff.

e.   Responsibility to the Children's Services Division in terms of legislation, standards, licensing and funding.

f.   Specified mechanisms for control of funding, budgeting, staffing and expenditure.

g.   Specified monitoring and evaluation procedures.

h.   Preservation of client confidentiality.

i.   Defined mechanisms for resolving disputes regarding service delivery.

j.   Procedures for promoting public awareness and participation.

2. Examples of Structure and Composition

Within the above guidelines local communities can design a children's services committee (CSC) reflecting conditions found in their areas. Many designs are possible and in this section of the consultation paper a few of these are outlined in order to indicate different approaches. The examples show a spectrum for choice. These are not the only alternatives available, but are rather suggestions out of which suitable forms may be constructed.

Some examples which come to mind for this purpose include the following:

a.   The CSC as an appointed body reporting to municipal council and composed of a combination of elected officials, service providers, citizens and consumers.

b.   The CSC as an appointed body reporting to municipal council and composed primarily of service providers.

c.   The CSC as a standing committee of municipal council composed of municipal elected officials.

Each of these models gives evidence of certain advantages, but it appears that example "a" best fulfills the requirements of the guidelines as set out. Examples "b" and "c" are more on the edges of the spectrum for choice. Proposals based on example "b" would have to give special attention to the manner of accountability and reporting relationships to local government and to consumers and the public. Proposals based on example "c" would need to define clearly the manner in which service providers, consumers and the public were to be made part of the policy-making process.

Each example raises certain questions concerning limitations to the design. The advantages indicated below, and the potential problems noted are not an exhaustive listing but are rather intended to assist communities in selecting suitable designs.

a.   The CSC as an appointed body reporting to municipal council and composed of a combination of elected officials, service providers, citizens, and consumers.

Advantages of Approach

1.   All concerned parties represented at policy—making level.

2.   Good awareness of immediate service needs.

3.   Program development function realistically performed.

4.   Representative balance of interests.

5.   Aspects of prevention and family support emphasized.

6.   Community credibility.

7.	Increased commitment of participants with different interests.

8.	Full utilization of all resources (voluntary, professional and public)

9.	Open lines of communication and coordinated reporting relationships.

10.	Clear focus of responsibility.

Potential Problems

1.	Possible domination by a few interests.

2.	Disputes delaying necessary decision–making.

3.	Reluctance in eliminating needless services.

4.	Less authoritative in the public mind.

5.	Unmanageable size particularly in large geographical areas.

6.	Difficulties in representing a large number of municipalities, towns, villages and other communities.

7.	Difficult to coordinate with overall municipal planning.

8.	Cost control and budgeting process more difficult.

9.	Possible exclusion of front line workers.

b.	The CSC as an appointed body reporting to municipal council and primarily composed of service providers.

Advantages of Approach

1.	Full utilization of existing resources.

2.	Least disruptive to present pattern of service delivery.

3.	Least loss of autonomy for service providers.

4.	Direct awareness of overlap and duplication of services.

5.	Ease of coordination among professionals and service providers in responding to needs.

6.	Community credibility because of history of past services.

7. Realistic cooperation in areas of intake, assessment, referral, placement and tracking.

8. Less costly to establish.

Potential Problems

1. Accountability to local government less clear.

2. Little participation by the public in planning and priority—setting.

3. Separated from overall municipal planning function.

4. Funds allocated by body without responsibility for raising funds.

5. Less emphasis on cost control.

6. Threat of domination by powerful agency or agencies.

7. Exclusion of front line workers and consumers.

8. Unmanageability in terms of representing all concerned service providers.

9. Resistance to monitoring and evaluation procedures.

10. Possible reluctance in taking on new responsibilities over time.

c. The CSC as a standing committee of municipal council composed of elected officials.

Advantages of Approach

1. Clearly identifiable focus of responsibility.

2. Simplicity of structure intelligible to the public.

3. Funds allocated by body partially responsible for raising funds.

4. Unified cost control.

5. Planning done in context of total municipal planning process.

6. Ease of coordination with other social service programs.

7. Possible ease in assuming additional functions over time.

8.   Initiation of minor or major revisions to the system.

9.   Potential for increased priority given to questions of children's services.

<div align="center">Potential Problems</div>

1.   Lack of familiarity with subject matter.

2.   Lack of familiarity with professional competencies and procedures.

3.   Loss of direct input from service providers and consumers at policy level.

4.   Insufficient time for counsellors to perform duties.

5.   Low priority given to "soft services" in some jurisdictions.

6.   Possible insufficient protection of interest of service providers and consumers.

7.   Composition of membership difficult when a number of municipalities are involved.

8.   Turnover every two years of elected officials.

9.   Possible staff conflict between municipal civil servants and agency professionals.

3. General Conclusions

In each of the examples noted above, emphasis is placed on a different dimension of a coordinated children's services system. Example "a" stresses broad participation of all interests at the policy—making level, while allowing for accountability and utilization of professional expertise. For this reason, as noted above, it appears to fulfill most appropriately the guidelines as set out. Example "b" focuses on professional expertise and experiences gained in the delivery of services, while example "c" stresses direct accountability to the tax payers and to the public. None of the emphases are exclusive, and properly structured, the strengths of one approach can be incorporated with the strengths of the others.

In attempting to achieve a coordinated service delivery system, it must be kept in mind that certain characteristics are essential. These

characteristics include: comprehensiveness (all of the necessary services and resources are in the system and are available to consumers); compatibility (services are properly linked and arranged based on identified need); and cooperation (relationships among human actors in the system are good).

In emphasizing the dimensions of professional expertise, broad representation and accountability, each of the examples offered recognizes the need for incorporation of these essential characteristics, and each acknowledges that adjustments must be made to its primary focus. If some variation of example "a" is developed, special concern must be given to respond to requirements of local government accountability while giving due weight to and respect for the experiences and successes of service agencies in the field.

If example "b", or some modification thereof, is proposed as a suitable design, interested constituencies outside the service delivery area must be assured a voice. Accordingly, sub–committees, advisory groups and task forces must become part of the structure with specific responsibilities and clear lines of accountability and reporting relationships.

If a design is chosen by a local community patterned on example "c", extra attention must be given to the structuring of sub–committees and advisory and professional groups to allow for full representation of all interests and full utilization of professional competencies presently operating.

4.   Regional Diversities and Children's Services

Ontario is a province of great regional diversities. In its Northern part one experiences vast distances to be travelled, a winter climate that can be most formidable, and a population diverse in its ethnic and cultural heritage, widely scattered through cities, towns, villages, improvement districts and unorganized territories. Local dependency for jobs on one or two industries can make northern communities particularly susceptible to economic fluctuations.

Native people and others find their traditional ways of earning a livelihood threatened and come to depend upon the support of a wide range of special services to help them and their families adjust to new circumstances. All these aspects of Northern Ontario call for a distinct approach to dealing with troubled children.

In the southern portions of the province one finds a mix of high–density, urbanized living along with less densely populated rural and agricultural

modes of life. Although 80% of Ontario's population live within the jurisdiction of a regional municipality, the majority of which are primarily urban, others live in restructured or unrestructured counties, smaller municipalities, townships, towns and villages. County jurisdictions ordinarily include both rural and urban components, although basically they remain rural in orientation. Rural perceptions of what is essential, what is useful and what is a luxury with reference to servicing the needs of troubled children and their families may differ sharply from the perceptions of the urban population.

Because of these widespread political, economic and social differences, which indeed make up the strength of the people of Ontario, local coordination of children's services presents a variety of different challenges. Traditional services were created in response to perceived needs of the time, and although often fragmented and uncoordinated made a significant contribution in saving and improving the lives of children.

Some communities acquired only limited experience in dealing with these issues, while others developed relatively sophisticated and systematic responses through a wide range of services. As a result of these past efforts there exists throughout Ontario a reservoir of accumulated knowledge, expertise, good will and commitment.

It is from this reservoir that the consultation process presently underway will draw. Local initiative, local collaboration and local wisdom in designing plans for a new system of service delivery will assure that whatever models are proposed will be relevant to local needs. The children of Ontario remain its greatest resource: they are its hope for the future. The imagination, intelligence and generosity of spirit in which we provide for their needs will be our greatest legacy.

Part Three
The Consultation Process

One of the purposes of this paper has been to promote discussion and a collective learning process leading to the formulation of general reactions to the issues raised and how those issues related to local circumstances throughout the province. The paper will also serve as the basis for some groups, municipalities or agencies to make specific proposals to the Children's Services Division for the establishment of local children's services committees.

All general comments and observations will be welcomed and should be mailed to the Children's Services Division of the Ministry of Community and Social Services in care of,

<div align="center">

Mr. Gordon McLellan,
Executive Director of Community Liaison and Child Welfare
1 St. Clair Avenue West,
Toronto, M7A 1H2

</div>

Written inquiries about the content of the paper should be directed to:

<div align="center">

Consultation Task Force
Children's Services Division
2nd Floor,
1 St. Clair Avenue West,
Toronto, M7A 1H2

</div>

Some groups will feel prepared, after sufficient discussion, to submit a proposal to the Ministry for the establishment of a local children's services committee in their area. These submissions should be based on the established policy and guidelines as outlined in the discussion paper and forwarded to Mr. McLellan by April 1, 1978.

Community Liaison Groups (C.L.G.) across the province will make available additional copies of the discussion paper and offer information and advice concerning the consultation process upon request. "Face sheets" will also be available from the C.L.G.'s, and we ask that they be used to accompany all general reactions, comments and specific proposals forwarded to the Division. Each "face sheet" will summarize the contents of the submission, setting forth its highlights and indicating those parties involved in its preparation.

The general reactions, comments and specific proposals for local children's services committees received by Mr. McLellan will be forwarded to other senior Ministry officials and members of the Task Force on Local Children's Services Committees (cf. Appendix B). These will be examined and comments returned to the authors of the submissions. Highlights of issues as they arise during the consultation process will be circulated through periodic distribution of the Children's Services Division Newsletter.

It is expected that the few developmental models established for implementation in 1978 will reflect the geographic, economic, social and cultural diversities existing in Ontario. Consultation about the selection of proposals will continue until April 1, 1978. Final approval will be in the hands of the Minister of Community and Social Services. All comments and suggestions that are received from the consultation process will be carefully considered.

Early in the year other discussion papers will be circulated. These will address such issues as provincial standards and information systems. A consultation paper with short-term legislative amendments was released in December. The Community Liaison Groups will give notice of these papers and will assist in making copies available. The consultation process will thus continue, and the procedures employed will be similar to those indicated here with reference to the present discussion paper.

Appendix A

Framework for Thinking about a Children's Services System

An effective system of services for children will organize services around the particular needs of children and their families, rather than offering pre-packaged programs from which they must choose.

As we embark on our effort to organize services for children with special needs into an effective system, we must have a clear under-standing of the framework within which we intend to operate. It will provide us with a reference point as we struggle with all of the details and problems we encounter in implementation. In this appendix, we will describe our understanding of the characteristics of an effective system of services, including working definitions of some key words and concepts.

An Understanding of Terms

It is important to define some of the key terms which are frequently used in any discussion of the human services system. These terms are: "system", "integration", and "coordination". Judge George Thomson, Associate Deputy Minister, Children's Services Division, stated in a speech May 10, 1977:

> Basic to the consolidation of children's services and rationalization of the system was recognition of the need for an integrated provincial authority and a local coordi-nating body.

An understanding of these key concepts is basic to the ideas expressed in this discussion paper.

System

A service system can be most simply described as "a complex of components in mutual interaction ... any whole consisting of interacting parts."[1] Individual agencies and programs are components of the human services system. The system possesses distinct properties and a unity of its own; it is more than the sum of its parts. The parts (components) can be understood only in relation to the larger whole which they constitute.[2]

The environment within which the human services system operates must also be considered. "Environment" in this sense includes people, organizations and activities in the local neighbourhood, community or region served by the system.

The system can be described as "open", to the extent that it has linkages with its environment which allow for regular feedback about the system's performance. With this information, the system can be flexible enough to accommodate change, which will improve its effectiveness. At the same time, these linkages will allow the system to influence organizations and individuals in its environment.

Integration

Integration means the organization of programs under one authority which sets the parameters within which they operate. The programs are free to develop in directions which are consistent with the general purposes and priorities of the system as a whole, as determined by the authority.

Coordination

Coordination can be defined as the articulation of elements in a social service delivery system so that comprehensiveness of, and compatibility and cooperation among elements are maximized. Comprehensiveness means that all of the necessary services and resources are in the system and available to consumers. Compatibility means that services are properly linked and sequenced, based on identified need. Cooperation

means that there are good working relationships among people in the delivery system.[3] The mode of coordination can be described in terms of its relative impact on the autonomy of service providers. In voluntary coordination, the coordinating agent is responsible for direct service provision as well as developing linkages between autonomous service providers. In mediated coordination, the primary responsibility of the coordinating agent is the development of linkages between autonomous service providers rather than providing direct service. In directed coordination, the coordinating agent has the authority to mandate the development of linkages between legally subordinate service providers.[4]

The distinctions between these modes of coordination and the previously offered definition of integration represent degrees of control over the autonomy of service providers. Local conditions and relationships will affect the mode of coordination used by the local children's services committees.

Understanding Policy

When these definitions are considered in the context of recent policy statements about children's services, the general implications of these statements become clearer. The consolidation of programs, previously under the jurisdiction of several ministries, into the newly created Children's Services Division of the Ministry of Community and Social Services is the first step toward an integrated provincial authority. The development of "local coordinating bodies" implies that existing programs and agencies will retain some of their autonomy, while service providers will work together in order to create a service system which is comprehensive and rational. The decision that these should be "local" coordinating bodies also recognizes that certain tasks (e.g. setting priorities for services needed in a particular area) are best performed at the local level.

What constitutes "local"? For a town with a distinct boundary, there will be a consensus. But in a large metropolitan area, such as those with regional government, there are multiple boundaries which circumscribe progressively smaller locales (e.g. area municipalities and wards) and informal boundaries which describe particular neighborhoods. How

"local" can we afford to go in developing local children's services committees? Can we afford one for every urban neighborhood or ward and every settlement dispersed throughout Northern Ontario? We will have to reconcile the issues of providing a local decision-making body close enough to the community to be sensitive to its needs, while trying to check the costs of widespread proliferation of local committees.

Denmark has developed a nationwide network of Child and Youth Committees which are successful in reflecting local conditions in their service delivery patterns. In Copenhagen, a city of over one million people, there are 24 districts, each with its own committee, to service a population of about 40,000. There is also a central committee which coordinates the efforts of the local committees across the city.

As we begin to clarify the meaning of terms used in policy statements by the Division, we become increasingly aware of their implications.

Characteristics of an Effective Service System

Ontario's attempt to integrate and coordinate human services and to transfer certain responsibilities to the local level has precedents in other provinces and other countries. We have examined experiences with service integration and coordination in British Columbia, Quebec, Manitoba, England, Denmark and the United States.

Following the presentation of characteristics for an effective system of services will be a descriptive analysis of the experiences in three of these jurisdictions to exemplify this framework.

We have also examined related experiences on a smaller scale in Ontario, (e.g. District Health Councils and District Working Groups for the Mentally Retarded). These prior experiences in Ontario lack the broad mandate and authority being exercised by the Children's Services Division to integrate and coordinate services.

All of these experiences have yielded valuable insights about those characteristics essential to the effectiveness of a service delivery system in meeting the needs of its clientele. The discussion of those characteristics will be illustrated by examples from other jurisdictions where they illuminate the issues involved.

"Effectiveness" refers to the extent to which a local coordinating body achieves its goals. The following functions are basic to any local coordination project:

1. analyzing a) needs of the target population, b) existing services, c) social trends affecting both

2. developing short- and long-range plans to meet identified needs

3. developing and coordinating a comprehensive range of services to match identified needs

4. monitoring the ways in which people receive services to ensure that their individual needs are being met effectively

5. evaluating the overall effectiveness of services in meeting the needs of the target population as a whole

6. allocating resources to promote programs and functions identified as high priority

1. Analysis of Needs, Services and Trends

The most basic characteristic of an effective system is that it have a clear definition of the target population it intends to serve. While individual agencies can, with more or less precision, identify their target population, few people or organizations develop an overview of the target population of an entire service system. The lack of such an overview means that some people receive too few services or none at all. Others may be over-serviced.

A thorough analysis of the needs of the target population must take into account the needs identified by that target population, the needs perceived by the service providers, and some objective indicators of need (e.g. physical or emotional isolation). The absence of a comprehensive analysis was a major criticism of the Seebohm Committee in their efforts to decentralize and integrate personal social services in England. [5] The result was that the objectives of the service system were limited to improving those parts of the system which were not working well. They failed to take into account what was missing in the service system. It is, therefore, difficult to say where services fall short of needs. If this should occur, the process of priority-setting will be based on insufficient information.

An inventory of services currently available to the target population in the region will provide a view of the relative match (or mismatch) of services and needs. Projections of social trends (e.g. housing, employment, population shifts) and their possible effects on children and their families will provide some long-range indicators for the directions of service development. Taken together, the analysis of needs, services and trends will provide a comprehensive picture of the present situation. Such a picture is essential to the development of services that will be effective in meeting the needs of the target population.

2. Planning: Short-run and Long-run

The picture presented by the previously described analysis will suggest directions for both service development and preventive strategies. The next step is to develop objectives which will guide policy-makers and program managers in their planning processes.

The development of a consensus on goals and objectives requires active participation by all of those involved with and affected by the children's services system. Consumers of services have both the right to be heard and the responsibility to speak up about their experiences. Front line workers have valuable insights to offer for program planning. Program managers have an overview of services, resources and problems. Leaders in local government and community organizations can reflect the prevailing mood of various segments of the community. All of these points of view are important for the development of a system of children's services.

The degree of participation in and clarity about its limitations should be specified early in the planning process in order to inhibit unrealistic expectations by various segments of the community. If we are committed to the involvement of consumers in the planning process, then we must be clear about their participation in decision-making.

During the reorganization of health and social services in Quebec, some consumer groups felt that their participation on the boards of community service centres would lead to increased political power and influence over conditions in their communities. In fact, the boards of those centres have very limited spheres of influence in contrast to those of the regional social service centres, which are dominated by professional interest groups. The result has been some frustration and anger on the part of consumer groups who thought that their participation would be more influential. [6]

The planning process itself is likely to be more effective if the provincial government develops guidelines for communities about what to include in their area plans. It must also provide resources and expertise to assist them in collecting and analyzing all of the information about needs, services and trends. If the planning function is kept separate from the service delivery function, it is more likely to be done well. At the same time, planning cannot be done in a vacuum. It must be closely associated with service delivery in order to stay in touch with the needs of the system and its clientele.

3. Coordination of Services with Needs

At the provincial level (i.e. the Children's Services Division) there must be a clear statement about the general range of services which should be provided at the local level. At the same local level, needs will be defined, priorities set and long-range plans formulated. A coordinated range of services to meet these needs must be provided.

The essence of an effective service system is its ability to closely match available resources with identified needs. Coordination of all elements in the service system is required: services and programs, resources, clients and information. The table on the following page illustrates this point.

Table 1

Elements Requiring Coordination

System Element	Aspect of Coordination		
	Comprehensiveness	Compatability	Cooperation
Programs	all needed services; a continuum of care	all needed sequences; all needed programs	all professionals work together with other parties
Resources	all needed funds and autonomy	correct allocation on basis of client need and case load	resource controllers work together and with other parties
Clients	all eligible clients are treated and in all areas in which they have needs	services are received in correct sequence consistent with individual needs	client representatives work together and with other parties
Information	central record keeping (clients), directory of services (programs), knowledge about available resources, continuous feedback relative to the operation of the system at all three levels.		

Source: (Aiken, et al. 1975)

Services should be organized around the particular needs of the consumer, rather than offering an array of pre-packaged programs which may or may not be suitable to those needs. When children or their families are expected to meet their needs by selecting, from available programs, the one which seems most nearly suitable, they are asked to settle for something which may not assist them adequately in meeting their needs. Those who cannot find what they need will either cease to look or will accept something that is inappropriate. For example, residential care facilities in Ontario are sometimes used more because of their availability rather than because they are truly suitable to the needs of the child and his or her family. [7]

Essential to the close coordination of the system's resources with the needs of its target population are clear lines of communication among all elements of the service system. Specific mechanisms are needed to ensure that all ongoing communications functions at all levels are working to keep the system flexible and responsive to consumer needs.

A coordinated system of services must also be accessible to those needing help. Accessibility must take into account all of the following factors:

- the geographic dispersal of the target population

- the linguistic and cultural orientation of the target population

- the potentially stigmatizing or labelling effect of procedures for getting help

- the provision of a range of alternatives which allows the consumer to choose the resources which will best meet his or her needs. [8]

4. Monitoring the Experiences of Consumers

The effectiveness of the children's services system will ultimately be tested by the individual experiences of people who want to use its services. Mechanisms for monitoring these experiences and feedback from those involved (the consumers and the workers) will help the system in making adjustments to correct failures in its efforts to service the needs

of its clientele. For example, a "tracking" mechanism will ensure that someone maintains overall responsibility for the success or failure of a referral for a particular service or resource. If it does not meet the consumer's need, then there will be someone to notice the failure and take corrective steps, such as renegotiating the needed service with the consumer.

In a number of American projects on service integration, case managers are used as agents for consumers to assist them in finding and using services which meet their needs. The case managers monitor consumers' experiences and act as a general resource, rather than being directly involved in providing services.

Effective monitoring will ensure that the system can be responsive to needs, flexible in its use of resources and open to change.

5. Evaluation of the System's Performance

Evaluation is required to ensure that the service system is accountable to those who pay for it .... and use it. A publicly funded system of services for children and families must be accountable in terms of the effectiveness of its services in meeting the needs of its target population and how it uses its financial resources.

Specific mechanisms for accountability must be developed and widely understood to encourage people in the community to exercise their right to hold the system accountable for its performance.

Such accountability requires clear standards as to what constitutes a good children's services system. The province is, at present, investing significant amounts of time and energy in developing these standards. Once they are developed, the local children's services committees will use these standards to assist local government to evaluate the effectiveness of the service system.

"Accountability" implies that there will be incentives for compliance with standards and that there will be sanctions in the event of non-compliance. Where there is responsibility for the provision of statutory services (e.g. child protection) the mandate should be legislated and incentives and sanctions stipulated.

Standards for a good child care system must be developed, and mechanisms set up which ensure that these standards are met. Technical assistance should be given to local children's services committees to assist them in this task.

6. Allocating resources

Money is the fuel that keeps the whole system going. A sufficient level of funding is necessary to allow the children's services system to fulfill its mandate in all of its implications. The development of program follows the flow of money. If we want to place a high priority on preventive programs, we must finance their development. If we expect the local system to be well coordinated, we must provide sufficient resources, mainly in the form of money and expertise, to support the local children's services committees to fully carry out their mandate.

We are all conscious of the need to use our fuel (i.e. money) economically to get the job done. We will not have sufficient money to finance the ideal system of services. We must, therefore, identify the range of essential services we want for our children and families "at risk" and finance them fully to get the job done. We must also tap local resources "in-kind" (e.g. space, special facilities) to support the development of children's services. A broad base of participation and support will provide access to a wide range of local resources.

A Word About Structure: Up to this point, we have focussed our thinking on what we want the children's services system to do, whom to involve and how to ensure its effectiveness. We are now ready to consider the kind of structure to build that will make all of this happen.

<u>The structure of the service system</u> (e.g. who operates the services and how the programs are displayed) <u>should be dictated by the functions it</u> <u>carries out, rather than asking children and families to adapt their needs</u> <u>to existing structures.</u>

We have been speaking about the children's services system as a whole, without describing the role to be played by individuals and agencies and the relationships between them. The structure of the children's services system will be a major factor in defining these relationships and the patterns of control over resources and programs. Some roles in the structure may be more powerful than others. We must have a clear understanding of the relationship between power and structure in order to devise the kinds of structures which will enhance the ways in which we want the system to work.

As we examine the models proposed, it will be important to think about the functions we have described in this section and the relationships we want to develop among all of those who have an interest in services for children with special needs.

Three Case Studies

The foregoing framework for an effective system of human services is based on an examination of a variety of experiences with the integration and coordination of services. Our framework will become useful as we apply it to our experience in Ontario. We can also use it to develop a better understanding of the lessons to be learned from other jurisdictions.

In this section, we will use the framework to examine three case studies of particular significance to the development of children's services in Ontario. The English system, based on the Seebohm report, highlights the integration and decentralization of services under a single municipal authority. The Danish system highlights a comprehensive system of services to children, using a nation-wide network of local committees as the authorities to ensure the delivery of effective services. The Massachusetts system highlights the state-wide use of children's councils. Following is a descriptive analysis of each, using our framework as a reference point.

The Seebohm Plan in England

One of the most frequently quoted experiments in human service inte-
gration is the English experience precipitated by the Seebohm Report
of 1969. Its primary recommendation was for the integration of all
personal social services at the local level into one social service
department under the authority of local government. This newly inte-
grated administrative framework was intended to solve many of the
problems of a fragmented and ineffective system of personal social
services.

A second recommendation in response to the fragmented system was the
creation of a "generic" social worker. There was an expectation that
such a generalist would gradually take the place of the many specialists
who seemed to be contributing to the fragmentation of services through
the diversity of their specializations.

Our analysis of reports written about the Seebohm proposals has reveal-
ed a number of interesting insights.

The integration of services into one administrative unit at the local level
seems to have resulted in a complex hierarchical structure. Consequent-
ly, there are significant problems between the central office and its area
"outposts".[9] People working in different parts of the operation will
develop differing perspectives and priorities. There are also reported
to be conflicts with other sectors of the human service system (e.g.
health) which see the local social service departments as disrupting their
control. A major overhaul of health services has been undertaken which
intends to join with the social service system to coordinate services.

The identification of needs has been a bone of contention. We commented
previously on the importance of developing a comprehensive analysis of
needs in order to set accurate priorities for service development. There
appear to be wide variations in locally identified needs, making the
systematic redistribution of limited resources difficult.[10] At the same
time, there are higher expectations based on the identification of pre-
viously unmet needs.[11]

The local social service departments in England have not taken the time
to include all major interest groups in the planning process. This tends
to aggravate the differences already mentioned above. It may also play
a part in the difficulties of developing good linkages with related systems
(e.g. health, education).

The coordination of direct services was intended to be the job of the
"generic" social worker. The various specialties (e.g. social work,
psychiatry) were unable to produce a hybrid that would incorporate the
important features of each specialty into a generalist capability. The
"generic" concept has more recently been re-defined to apply to multi-
disciplinary area teams. It has also proven difficult to integrate the
separate disciplines into "generic" working teams. [12]

The reorganization of services seems to have been seriously hampered
by an inadequate resource base for essential services. [13]

Since an adequate resource base must be built on an accurate analysis of
needs, we come full circle to the crucial importance of a comprehensive
analysis of needs.

A general observation resulting from the English experience is that the
goals of integration and decentralization are difficult to achieve for lack
of understanding of the components of an effective service network. [14]
One of the purposes of this discussion paper is to contribute to our col-
lective understanding of how to make our system of services for children
with special needs more effective.

A major review of the English system of personal social services is about
to be completed early in 1978. It may provide us with a more comprehen-
sive assessment which will enrich our experience in Ontario.

The National Child Care System in Denmark[15]

Not all experiments in service integration are part of the new wave of reform in human services. The integration and decentralization of services, hailed as a new strategy on this continent, has been quietly developed over several decades in Denmark. They have evolved a nationwide network of Child and Youth Committees, selected by and accountable to township councils, which are the local authorities providing services to children and families. They carry out the functions of protection, advocacy and prevention within standards set by the central government.

The Danish system has a number of positive features that have been demonstrated over time:

- support for families in need prevents major problems from developing;

- a trial and error approach to service development;

- rapid, yet orderly, growth of services in response to needs;

- funds for programs are forthcoming after quality control is established;

- standard-setting by central government with power of enforcement;

- a balance between central expertise and local wisdom;

- a constant push toward simplification, integration and decentralization;

- multiple use of facilities;

- a team approach incorporating use of lay workers and paraprofessionals;

- children's rights protected and promoted;

- individualization of care.

As a backdrop for the system, there is a positive and demonstrative attitude toward children which is essential to its effectiveness. For example, a child placed in a private, unlicensed home day care setting might be reported to the local committee by a neighbor so that the quality of care could be assessed.

A critical evaluation of the Danish system acknowledges some problems. The most pervasive problem is the conflict between the rights of children and adults. Cooperation in providing services is sometimes hampered by conflicts with parents or institutions.

There are some other coordination problems as well. For example, when a child is placed in an institution, responsibility for care is shifted there from the local committee. There is a potential break in continuity of care that can be detrimental to coordinated services. If the placement fails, the institution must notify the committee, or continuity of care will break down.

The expenditure of money is also an issue in some townships. Some local councils use a conservative interpretation of the law to save money on discretionary services. There is some feeling that insufficient energy goes into prevention programs. In other townships, the local committee may use group placements which are more expensive than private home placements.

The system seems to be effective in identifying needs, planning services and developing them within standards of quality. Ironically, this creates a financing problem because of the demand for service and the universal access to services. In the day care field, for instance, the central government has had to spend increasing amounts of money to provide day care in response to need. The commitment of the people, through their central government, to serving the needs of children is reflected in their willingness to support the increased expenditure of money for day care.

Of all the jurisdictions studied, the system in Denmark seems to be the most successful and the most experienced. We have a lot to learn from them as we embark on a path quite familiar to children, parents, town councillors, service providers, central government "experts", and the general public in Denmark.

Children's Services in Massachusetts

Over the past four years, the organization of delivery of children's ser-
vices in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has been influenced by the
advent and subsequent activity of 40 Councils for Children, which cover
the state.

These Councils for Children, the first of which were established in 1973,
have the responsibility for advising the Office for Children, a state agen-
cy which is relatively small in terms of its bureaucracy, and which has
a central, regional and local area structure. It has the mandate to
monitor and evaluate the combined programs directed towards children,
but often funded through other state agency budgets (e.g. Public Health).
It also reviews proposals for new programs.

The Councils for Children are considered the "grass roots elements" of
this system, and act as advocates for the needs of children in their areas.

The Councils are all locally elected, and while they vary in size (from 21
to 50 members) they must have 51% lay or consumer representation, the
remainder being professionals in the field of children services delivery.

Each Council has two functions. One is to monitor all state supported
programs in its area in terms of service activities and annual budget
requests. Councils have the responsibility to identify gaps in service,
and then to work, through the regional and state levels of the Office for
Children and the state legislature, to have these services developed and
funded.

The other critical function they perform is to be responsible for the oper-
ation of the Help for Children, a phone service in each major community
which provides information, referrals, undertakes advocacy for children
in need, and monitors each case it handles to ensure proper responses
have been made.

Initially each Council received a sum of money ($130,000) per year to al-
locate in its local area for the provision of services which did not exist, or
were insufficient. These programs then would become part of the services
funded through the appropriate state agency the next year, and the annual
$130,000 then was allocated to a second identified need area. This proc-
ess took place only over two fiscal years, the state legislators subsequen-
tly becoming concerned with the rapid increase in expenditure this system
would generate over a short period of time. Removal of the global budget,
limited as it was, resulted in a marked decline in interest in the short
run (a year to 18 months) but to a subsequent development of the major
advocacy role in the areas. Council members began working through the
political process to change the allocations for programs funded by the
state.

In spite of the loss of fiscal authority there has been increased interest in
the Councils because of the potential for effective lobbying for changes in
state legislation and funding. Interest is once again very high.

Some of the problems which have emerged are characteristic of other
similar patterns. The heavy demands of time and energy placed on
elected but unpaid Council members, and their frequent concern about
their lack of sufficient knowledge of all program areas has been one dif-
ficulty. Another major concern has been the lack of authority over the
non-state funded agencies and their activities, and the lack of authority
to enforce a greater degree of cooperation, coordination and integration.

There have also been some increasing concerns expressed by legislators
about the increasing advocacy role being played by these Councils. This
might generate, over time, a negative reaction towards their continued
existence. At present, however, the Councils are given their authority
for existence by legislation, and this provides a measure of protection.
A major need on the part of government is for patience while the balance
between the Councils, the state Office for Children, and the legislature
is worked through.

An interesting additional structural comment is that the Council for
Children areas are coincidental with those for education and mental
health, assisting in coordination of these components of children's servi-
ces. Another interesting factor is the required presence of "children"
(older teenagers) on each board, along with representation from other

ethnic, socio-economic and geographic components in each area.

Council staffing has stayed small, with one full-time paid employee for each Council as its executive director (along with minimal support staff). This too places a heavy burden on this person and is something of the same problem faced in Ontario with health council staffing.

On balance, the legislatively mandated, locally elected, citizen-dominated boards appear to be making major changes in the provision of children's services in Massachusetts, although their strong advocacy position has created on-going difficulties with other major parties in the delivery of services.

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Appendix B
Advisory Task Force on Local Children's Services Committees

James Armstrong, Central Toronto Youth Services, Toronto

Graham Berman, Ontario Medical Association, Ontario Psychiatric Association

W. Macmillan Carson, Ontario Municipal Social Service Administrators, Commissioner of Social Services, Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth

Ralph Garber, Dean, Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto

Guy Goulard, Judge Provincial (Family) Court, Ottawa

Trip Kennedy, Municipal Liaison Committee, Alderman, City of Ottawa

M.J. MacMillan, Senior Probation and Aftercare Officer, Hamilton

Edward Mitchelson, Municipal Liaison Committee, Councillor, Regional Municipality of Niagara

Pat Mulgrew, Child Development Centre, Kenora

Barry Sheppard, Executive Director, United Way, London

Walter Swain, Board of Directors, Children's Aid Society, Sault Ste. Marie

Jesse Watters, Department of Psychiatry, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto

A future consultation paper will concern automated information systems.

You will be notified of its release in a special edition of the Children's Services Newsletter.